

# Newsletter 19th December 2025

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School



Work hard, love tenderly, walk humbly: trusting in God

Dear parents, grandparents and parishioners,

As we reach the end of this term, I want to take a moment to reflect on just how magical the past few weeks have been here at St Joseph's. From our beautiful nativities and Christmas parties to our unforgettable drive-in movie, energetic Reindeer Run, and finally our Christmas carols—our school has truly sparkled. Even our mischievous school elf has added his own brand of festive chaos!

None of this would be possible without our incredible staff. To our office team, caretaker, cleaners, dinner staff, teachers, kitchen staff, teaching assistants and lunchtime supervisors—**thank you**. Thank you for always putting our children first in everything you do, for the love you show, the standards you hold, and the joy you bring. You make St Joseph's a place filled with warmth, care, and laughter every single day.

To our governors and to Father Shaun—thank you for your constant support and genuine care. We are truly blessed to have people who believe so deeply in our school, our staff, and our families.

To our wonderful parents, grandparents and carers—your support, encouragement, and kind words mean so much. You work with us, cheer us on, and help make St Joseph's a very special, loving community where children flourish.

And finally... to our wonderful children. You are the heart of our school and the reason we do everything we do. Your curiosity, kindness, resilience, and joy bring St Joseph's to life. You make us proud every day—through the way you look out for each other, try your best, and fill our corridors with energy and smiles. You are special, you are important, and you are loved.

### **House Group Winners**

A huge well done to our Blue Team (St Aidan's) for winning the House Points this term, and to our Red Team (St for achieving the Gold Star Award! You have shown the importance of excellent behaviour, teamwork and perseverance. Your positive attitude, kindness towards others and commitment to always doing your best really shine through. You are wonderful role models for the rest of the school, and we are incredibly proud of each and every one of you. Keep aiming high, keep supporting one another, and keep showing what it means to live out our school values every day.

### **Mini Vinnies Trip**

Our wonderful Mini Vinnies took to Stanley Front Street this week to spread some festive cheer. Armed with smiles and handmade Christmas cards, they visited local shops to share kindness and joy within our community. The locals were absolutely delighted by their thoughtfulness, and many commented on how uplifting it was to see our children taking time to brighten someone's day.

### **St Cuthbert's Care Fundraising**

We are absolutely thrilled to share that we raised a whopping £1,814 for St Cuthbert's Care!

Thank you to everyone who contributed with such generosity and kindness — your support will make a real difference to those who need it most.

Wishing you all a magical Christmas filled with peace, rest, and time with the people you love.

We look forward to welcoming you back in the New Year (Tuesday 6th January 2026) for another exciting term together.

Mass times for Christmas Eve

- Christmas Vigil 4:00 pm St Joseph's
- Christmas Vigil 6:30 pm St Patricks
- Christmas Morning 9:30 am St Joseph's

**Merry Christmas and God bless,**

*Mrs M Urwin*

Headteacher

## Reminders

### Outstanding Payments

Any outstanding payments on ARBOR (school meals/ breakfast club/ wrap around care) **must be cleared and kept in credit**. If anyone has any problems with making payments, please contact the school office to discuss further:

- School meals cost £2.95 per day or £14.75 per week (these must be paid in advance)
- Breakfast club is £4 per day (your child must be booked into the session)
- Wrap around care is £6 per day (your child must be booked into the session)

### Reception class intake 2026/27

A reminder If your child is due to start Reception class in September 2026 you need to apply for a school place via Durham County Council School Admissions, even if your child currently attends our nursery unit. The closing date to apply for a primary school place is midnight on Thursday 15 January 2026. <https://www.durham.gov.uk/schooladmissions>



As you know, attendance is hugely important, and we report attendance on a weekly/ monthly/ termly basis. We monitor attendance/lateness very closely in school and will raise any concerns with parents/carers on an individual basis. If you have any concerns with regards to your child's attendance/lateness, please contact us as soon as possible so we can work together to resolve any issues.

**This week's attendance is 95.9%. Our target is 97%**

**Nursery:** 99%

**Reception:** 98.75%

**Year 1:** 89.66%

**Year 2:** 99%

**Year 3:** 94.48%

**Year 4:** 96.36%

**Year 5:** 94.44%

**Year 6:** 97.86%

**Well done to Nursery and Year 2 who won this week's attendance award!**

**Well done to Year 2! Who had the highest attendance for the Autumn term, of 97.02%**

## Head Teachers Award

**The following children have received a Head Teachers Award this week:**

**Nursery:** Rudy for always being a little superstar!

**Reception:** Francesca for always being so polite and kind

**Year 1:** Kaliah for always following the St Joseph's Way

**Year 2:** Chester for becoming more and more confident

**Year 3:** Ruby for outstanding behaviour

**Year 4:** Harley-Kate for always looking out for others

**Year 5:** Will for always putting a smile on my face

**Year 6:** Zander for being a proud member of our school family

## Star of the Week

**The following children have received a Star of the Week certificate this week:**

**Nursery:** Ellis for being an amazing role model and always following the St Joseph's Way

**Reception:** Harper for lots of super effort in phonics

**Year 1:** Ruby for a fabulous first term in Year 1

**Year 2:** Jenson for his excellent participation in lessons throughout this term

**Year 3:** Aria-May for excellent listening and always being a role model in class

**Year 4:** Izzy R for excellent participation in lessons this term

**Year 5:** Molly for an excellent attitude to reading

**Year 6:** Tia for her fantastic attitude to school life

## Awards of the week

**Captain's Table:** Rudy, Faith, Ivie, Chester, Freddie, Olivia-Kate, Will, Emie

**Mission Statement:** Jenson, Ewan, Beau, Mya, Arabella, Ella, Kamran, Freya

**British Values:** Isaac, Brody, Ivanna, Maddison, Eadie, Karan, Tega, Isla

**Writer of the week:** Cora, Kaveh, Jesse, Lenny, Clementine, Emily L, Ollie

Please see below what our children have been getting up to this week in school

What a lovely festive final week we have had in **Early Years**. We started the week with a Polar Express Day, had a lovely Christmas party yesterday with a very special visit from Santa and have loved singing lots of Christmas songs and taking part in Christmas crafts. We hope you all have a wonderful Christmas holiday. Well done, Early Years!







🎄 ✨ Well Done Year 1! ✨ 🎄

You've worked so hard this term and made amazing progress! We are so proud of your effort, kindness, and enthusiasm. Well done for all your hard work and resilience through this busy

half term, you have been superstars! Enjoy the festive season, have a wonderful Christmas, and come back ready for more exciting learning in the new year!





**Year 2** have had a wonderful half term and have been truly amazing throughout. Their work ethic and determination have shone through in everything they have done. We enjoyed a lovely final week, finishing our English work based on 'The Santa Trap', and beginning a new maths topic on shape, where the children identified and explored the properties of 2D shapes. In computing, the children continued working with Bee-Bots, creating and following their own sets of algorithms with great enthusiasm. They also danced the day away at their Christmas party and were fantastic during our carol service. Well done, Year 2! Have a lovely, restful Christmas break — we look forward to seeing you again in 2026. 🎄 ✨







The children have thoroughly enjoyed all of the festivities this week. They completed their work on the poem *'Twas the Night Before Christmas'* and loved reading it aloud with great expression. Everyone had a fantastic time at the Christmas party, where there was lots of fun dancing and celebrating with friends. We ended the week with a wonderful carols by the Christmas tree service, which was a special and memorable occasion to share together. We hope you all have a restful and peaceful Christmas and we look forward to seeing you in the new year.





**Year 4** have had the best time over the last couple of weeks, enjoying the festivities! We all performed amazingly in our Nativity, ran our socks off in the reindeer run, raising lots of money for St Cuthbert's care in the process! We enjoyed sitting together to have our Christmas lunch and had a brilliant time at our Christmas party. We even managed to squeeze some lessons in! Time for a well earned break Year 4!







**Year 5** have had a great week of festivities and thoroughly enjoyed it! We danced the day away at our Christmas party, played Christmas charades and sang Christmas songs during our karaoke. We even managed to squeeze in some maths where we continued to learn about fractions by adding two mixed numbers and adding fractions with whole numbers. We ended a fun filled week by singing Christmas carols with our wonderful friends and families at church. We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!









The end of a very busy term in **Year 6**. The children have worked incredibly hard and have embraced all of the challenges that have been thrown at them. They performed brilliantly in their Christmas productions and have represented the school brilliantly at various events throughout the term. They have enjoyed a more relaxed last week of term, spending time with their buddies and working on the more creative subjects in school. At the start of the week, they created their own clay models based on those by Lorient Stern. They will paint these in the new year. Have a lovely Christmas and new year, we look forward to welcoming the children back in January.

















